

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

02-277

M. Christine Shaffer 3204 Martin Lane, PO Box 396, Springtown, PA 18081

January 28, 2003

ORIGINAL

Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEB 05 2003
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Dear Commissioner Martin:

I am a citizen and resident of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. My township has appointed me as its representative in forming a coalition of municipalities to address cable television franchise renewals. The reason the eleven or so municipalities want to work together on this issue is because of their common frustrations stemming from lack of cable competition.

For five years I have been becoming more and more aware of the shortcomings of the Telecommunications Act. Part of the intent of the **Act** was to increase competition and to provide a vehicle for the creation of community media, thus for the democratization of media. However, local municipalities are at a great disadvantage when it comes to contracting with providers. Even when there were numerous smaller providers in Bucks County there was never overlap and therefore no competition whatsoever. Satellite distribution is not competition because it cannot provide public, educational, or government channels. Following all the corporate mergers there is only one provider in most of the County. Small municipal governments are no match for this large, powerful company, with its huge lobbying ability and legal expertise.

The Federal Communications Commission should recognize the unfair and inherent lobby advantage of the telecommunications industry when it argues for deregulation. The airwaves belong to the public as do municipal rights of way, and in return for the use of those public assets for private profit, the industry should be required to offer competitive choice. So long as this is not the case, subscribers will continue to get shoddy service, higher rates, decreased sources of information, and obstructions to their efforts to make telecommunications benefit their local community.

Enabling corporations to consolidate and to own most of the media forms serving one geographic area in the name of economies of scale or in the name of technology development is to disempower and impoverish the very market being served. The Federal Communications Commission would serve the public best and maximize the benefits of the technologies by regulating to promote diversity of media ownership, diversity of media content, and diversity of media access by consumers. Private monopoly of media is truly antithetical to democracy.

Sincerely,

M. Christine Shaffer

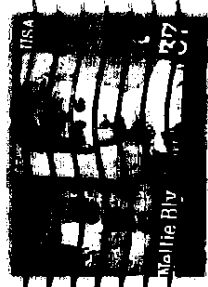
M. Christine Shaffer

M. Christine Shaffer
5204 Madison Lane
P.O. Box 996
Springtown, PA 18081

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FCC - MAIL ROOM



Commissioner Peter J. D'Amico
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20541

02-277

M. Christine Shaffer 3204 Martin Lane. PO Box 396. Snrinetown. PA 18081

January 28, 2003

Commissioner Michael J. Copps
 Federal Communications Commission
 445 12th St. S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20554

ORIGINAL

FEB 05 2003

FCC - MAIL ROOM

Dear Commissioner Copps:

I am a citizen and resident of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. My township has appointed me as its representative in forming a coalition of municipalities to address cable television franchise renewals. The reason the eleven or so municipalities want to work together on this issue is because of their common frustrations stemming from lack of cable competition.

For five years I have been becoming more and more aware of the shortcomings of the Telecommunications Act. Part of the intent of the Act was to increase competition and to provide a vehicle for the creation of community media, thus for the democratization of media. However, local municipalities are at a great disadvantage when it comes to contracting with providers. Even when there were numerous smaller providers in **Bucks** County there was never overlap and therefore no competition whatsoever. Satellite distribution is not competition because it cannot provide public, educational, or government channels. Following all the corporate mergers there is only one provider in most of the County. Small municipal governments are no match for this large, powerful company, with its huge lobbying ability and legal expertise.

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Confirmed

Sincerely,

FEB 06 2003

Distribution Center

M. Christine Shaffer

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FEB 6 2003

CC-B-40-101-1

Jerry Bloomer
2146 Minnekahta Avenue
Hot Springs, South Dakota 57747
(605) 745-7818

January 22, 2003

Michael Powell, FCC Chair
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

FEB 6 - 2003

Distribution Center

Dear Mr. Powell,

I am writing to urge the FCC to preserve, and not weaken, the rule that prohibits cross ownership of newspapers and television stations in the same market. Media diversity should be a top priority for the FCC and *not* the economic benefit of corporations seeking to concentrate their holdings in these areas. Media concentration cripple democracy. Totalitarian regimes in the past have dominated their media to the detriment of those nations and the world. I believe there is already too much concentration of ownership in the American media.

Sincerely,



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FEB 05 2003

FCC-MAILROOM

ORIGINAL

Dear FCC Commissioner Copps:

Regarding the **FCC's** Docket Number 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules:

At a time when our country is preparing for war, perhaps no action could be so patriotic as to focus on the freedoms we want to protect. One of those is freedom of speech. To me, that means the freedom to listen to a diversity of voices and views.

In recent years, as the requirements for broadcast licensing became less stringent, the voices we have been able to listen to have become more and more uniform, in their content and their sound. In fact, some are just the same voices over and over, using different names. These are the results of having a few large conglomerates own most of the broadcasting and news facilities and a lot of corporate intermarriage.

As you consider releasing the broadcast owners from even more regulations, making it easier to own radio, tv and newspaper outlets simultaneously and often in the same markets, I would ask you to think about what this does to our democracy and our economy.

Gone are the days when some odd-looking, whiny-sounding singer with a lot to say can be heard by turning on the radio. Little by little the record companies, also owned by giant corporations, are screening them out. Then there are the consultants and the music lists and the program directors who fear for their jobs if the numbers go down. Thus, much of the music we hear is manufactured by corporations like Disney - Britney Spears is a good example. Nothing against Ms. Spears, but she is an example of somebody's fantasy of what music in America should be like and she is packaged and sold like a box of cereal. What follows are sound-a-likes and act-a-likes and ultimately, in her young audience, think-a-likes.

Speaking of think-a-likes, allowing one person, a Rupert Murdoch for instance, to control as many broadcast outlets as he can buy, is a threat to our democracy. It means all we will hear or see or read, sometimes in the majority of a major market, will be his opinion of what we should hear or see or read. It invites control, dare I say it mild-control.

Isn't being controlled by other cultures exactly what we are fighting against? Terrorism is about control. If the people in our nation cease to think independently, we are ripe for control and ripe for a takeover. There are innovative ideas that can help save our democracy in places besides the top of the government food chain. But we will never hear or experience them if our diversity of voices is squelched.

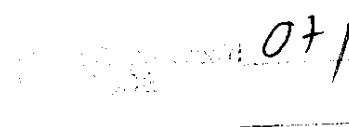
There are new ideas in governance, health, and commerce that would make us a better and a stronger nation in which to live. But if those ideas cannot be expressed because our media is owned by billionaires with no interest in what the locals think, there will be fewer jobs, little growth and no new cures for cancer.

Don't let our airwaves be a series of malls from one coast to the other. Put an end to thinking like Stepford Wives and let's bring back ascertainment interviews, public service announcements, SMALL group ownerships and local voices. Suppressing the voices of the people of this country by driving over them with a steamroller will not make the dissonance go away. It's time for an end to deregulation. Opening the airwaves to the people who really own them is the only way to have a free press and to keep our nation from becoming a country of pushovers, who might collapse if, heaven forbid, there is ever another 9-11.

Sincerely,



Beth Blakeman



Dear FCC Commissioner Marlin:

02-227

FEB 05 2003

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see or read. It

Sincerely,

Beth Blakeman

Beth Blakeman

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FCC - MAILROOM

ORIGINAL

Dear FCC Commissioner Adelstein:

Regarding the **FCC's** Docket Number 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules:

At a time when our country is preparing for war, perhaps no action could be so patriotic as to focus on the freedoms we want to protect. One of those is freedom of speech. To me, that means the freedom to listen to a diversity of voices and views.

In recent years, as the requirements for broadcast licensing became less stringent, the voices we have been able to listen to have become more and more uniform, in their content and their sound. In fact, some are just the same voices over and over, using different names. These are the results of having a few large conglomerates own most of the broadcasting and news facilities and a lot of corporate intermarriage.

As you consider releasing the broadcast owners from even more regulations, making it easier to own radio, tv and newspaper outlets simultaneously and often in the same markets, I would ask you to think about what this does to our democracy and our economy.

Gone are the days when some odd-looking, whiny-sounding singer with a lot to say can be heard by turning on the radio. Little by little the record companies, also owned by giant corporations, are screening them out. Then there are the consultants and the music lists and the program directors who fear for their jobs if the numbers go down. Thus, much of the music we hear is manufactured by corporations like Disney - Britney Spears is a good example. Nothing against Ms. Spears, but she is an example of somebody's fantasy of what music in America should be like and she is packaged and sold like a box of cereal. What follows are sound-a-likes and act-a-likes and ultimately, in her young audience, think-a-likes.

Speaking of think-a-likes, allowing one person, a Rupert Murdoch for instance, to control as many broadcast outlets as he can buy, is a threat to our democracy. It means all we will hear or see or read, sometimes in the majority of a major market, will be his opinion of what we should hear or see or read. It invites control, dare I say it mind-control.

Isn't being controlled by other cultures exactly what we are fighting against? Terrorism is about control. The people in our nation cease to think independently, we are ripe for control and ripe for a takeover. There are innovative ideas that can help save our democracy in places besides the top of the government food chain. But we will never hear or experience them if our diversity of voices is squelched.

There are new ideas in governance, health, and commerce that would make us a better and a stronger nation in which to live. But if those ideas cannot be expressed because our media is owned by billionaires with no interest in what the locals think, there will be fewer jobs, little growth and no new cures for cancer.

Don't let our airwaves be a series of malls from one coast to the other. Put an end to thinking like Stepford Wives and let's bring back ascertainment interviews, public service announcements, SMALL group ownerships and local voices. Suppressing the voices of the people of this country by driving over them with a steamroller will not make the dissonance go away. It's time for an end to deregulation. Opening the airwaves to the people who really own them is the only way to have a free press and to keep our nation from becoming a country of pushovers, who might collapse if, heaven forbid, there is ever another 9-11.

Sincerely,



Beth Blakeman

ORIGINAL

FEB 05 2003

Dear FCC Commissioner Abernathy:

Regarding the FCC's Docker Number 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast ownership rules:

FCC - MAIL ROOM

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As you consider releasing the broadcast owners from even more regulations, making it easier to own radio, tv and newspaper outlets simultaneously and often in the same markets, I would ask you to think about what this does to our democracy and our economy.

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Sincerely,



Beth Blakeman



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